

# Saturday Magazine.

No. 153.

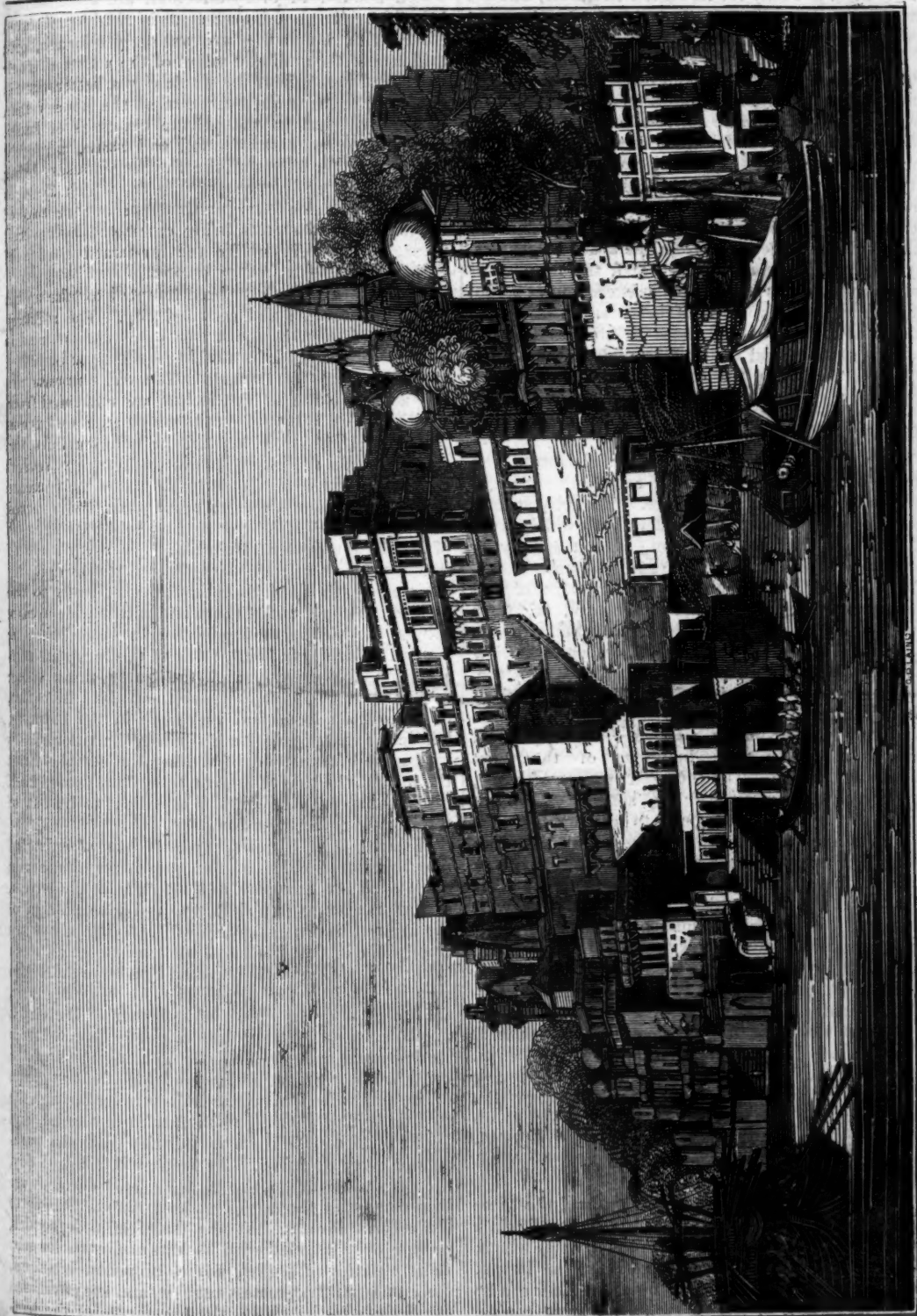
NOVEMBER



22<sup>ND</sup>, 1834.

PRICE  
ONE PENNY.

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION  
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.



BENARES. VIEW OF A GHAT, OR. LANDING-PLACE

## EAST INDIA STATIONS.

## No. V. BENARES. PART I.

BENARES, or as it is usually styled, "the most holy city," is certainly one of the most interesting cities we possess in the East. It is situated on the left or northern bank of the river Ganges, and is distant 136 miles from Patna, and 380 from Calcutta. It is the capital of an extensive and populous district of Hindostan, which bears the same name, and is remarkable not only for its sacred character, but for the singularity of its structure, its vast wealth, and its immense population.

The ancient name of the city was *Casi*, the Splendid, but this it afterwards lost, and probably when it fell into the hands of its Mohammedan conquerors. Its present title is said to be derived from the two rivers, the Benar and the Assee, which flow into the Ganges, the one above, and the other below the city. The city itself is very extensive, stretching as it does for several miles along the bank of the Ganges; but extensive as it is, it contains a far larger population than could be anticipated from the space it occupies. By a census taken in the year 1803, the number of the inhabitants was represented as exceeding 582,000, whilst the houses formed of brick and stone were calculated at 12,000, and those of mud at 16,000; and since that period the number of both, and more especially the latter, has considerably increased, the city having extended itself to the neighbouring villages. It is, in fact, without exception, the most populous city in Hindostan.

No written description, however elaborate, can convey even a faint idea of the extraordinary peculiarities of this singular place. Though strictly Eastern in its character, it differs very widely from all the other cities of Hindostan; and it is only by pictorial representations that any adequate notion can be formed of the mixture of the beautiful and grotesque, which, piled confusedly together, form that stupendous wall of buildings which spreads along the Ganges at Benares. No panoramic view has ever been exhibited of this extraordinary place. The river is about thirty feet below the level of the houses, and is attained by means of numerous *ghauts*, or landing-places, which spread their broad steps between fantastic buildings of the most curious description. The confused masses of stone, which crowd upon each other, sometimes present fronts so bare and lofty, as to convey the idea of a prison or a fortress. Others are broken into diminutive pagodas, backed by tall mansions seven stories in height, and interspersed with gothic gateways, towers, and arches, all profusely covered with ornaments, balconies, verandahs, battlements, mulioned windows, balustrades, turrets, cupolas, and round and pointed domes, the fancies of all ages. Since the conquest of the city by Aurungzebe, Mussulman architecture has reared its light and elegant formations amid the more heavy and less tasteful structures of Hindoo creation. From a mosque, built upon the ruins of a heathen temple, spring numerous minarets, which now rank amongst the wonders of the city. Their lofty spires shoot up into the golden sky from a dense cluster of buildings, crowning the barbaric pomp below with graceful beauty.

Notwithstanding its great antiquity, and the sums lavished upon its pagodas, Benares does not boast a single specimen of those magnificent temples which, in other parts of India, convey so grand an idea of the vast conceptions of their founders. Here are no pyramidal masses of fretted stone, no large conical

mounds of solid masonry standing alone to astonish the eye, as at Bindrabund; no gigantic town like the Cootub-Minar, at Delhi, to fill the imagination with awe and wonder; but the whole of this enormous city is composed of details, intermingled with each other without plan or design, yet forming altogether an architectural display of the most striking and imposing character. Amid much that is strange and fantastic, there are numerous specimens of a pure and elegant taste; and the smaller antique pagodas, which abound in every direction, are astonishingly beautiful. The lavish ornaments of richly-sculptured stone, with which they are profusely adorned, give evidence of the skill and talent of the artists of their day; and throughout the whole city a better taste is displayed in the embellishments of the houses than is usually found in the private buildings of India. The florid ornaments of wood and stone, profusely spread over the fronts of the dwelling-houses, bring to the mind recollections of Venice, which Benares resembles in some other particulars: one or two of the lofty narrow streets being connected by covered passages, not very unlike the far-famed Bridge of Sighs.

No European has ever been tempted to take up his abode in the close and crowded city. The military and civil station is about two miles distant, and is called *Secrole*. There is nothing striking or beautiful in the environs of Benares. The cantonments are flat and destitute of views, but are redeemed from positive ugliness by the groves which surround them. Immediately, however, beyond the military lines, the tract towards the city becomes interesting; several very handsome Mussulman tombs show the increase of the followers of a foreign creed, even in the sacred city of Brahma. A long straggling suburb, composed of houses of singular construction, in every stage of dilapidation, rendered exceedingly picturesque by intervening trees and flowering shrubs, leads to the gate of the city; and a short and rather wide avenue brings the visitor to the *chokey*, a large irregular square. From this point, vehicles of European construction are useless, and the party must either mount upon elephants, dispose themselves in *tanjons*, or proceed on foot; and very early in the morning, before the vast population is stirring, the latter affords by far the best method of visiting the temples; but the instant the tide of human beings has poured itself into the narrow avenues, it is expedient to be out of the thickly-gathering throng.

Benares, at day-break, presents less of animated life than most cities of the same magnitude and extent. A few sweepers only appear in the streets, and all the houses are shut up, and give no sign of the multitudes which swarm within. The shops are closely barricaded, the usual mode of fastening them being by a strong chain attached by a large padlock to a staple beneath the threshold. At this early hour, the streets are very clean, and the air of the city is much cooler and fresher than might be expected from its denseness and population. The members of the brute creation are up and abroad with the first gleam of the sun; the Brahminic bulls wander through the streets, monkeys spring from cornice to cornice, and flights of pigeons and paroquets dart from the parapets in every direction. As soon as it is broad day, the priests repair to the temples, and devotees are seen conveying the sacred water from the Ganges to the several shrines. At the doors of the pagodas, persons are stationed with baskets of flowers for sale. Long rosaries of scarlet, white, or yellow blossoms, seem to be in the greatest request, and are purchased as offerings to the gods: the *navements* of the tem-



ples are strewn with these, the only pleasing ceremonial connected with Hindoo worship. The too abundant supply of water, the dirty throng of religious beggars, and the incessant cries of Ram! Ram! almost compel the visiter speedily to escape from the noise and crowd.

The Observatory and the Minarets are the principal objects of attraction to parties resorting to the city; but in their way thither, those who take an interest in the homely occupations of the native traders may be amused by the opening of the shops, and the commencement of the stir, bustle, and traffic, which, by ten o'clock, will have reached its height. The rich merchandise with which the city abounds, according to the custom of Hindoostan, is carefully concealed from the view of passengers; but in the tailors' shops, some of the most costly products of the neighbouring countries are exhibited. Those skilful artists, who can repair a rent with invisible stitches, sit in groups, employed in mending superb shawls, which, after having passed through their practised hands, will sell to inexperienced purchasers as new and fresh from the looms of Thibet. The shops of the coppersmiths make the most show; they are gaily set out with brass and copper vessels of various kinds, some intended for domestic use, and others for that of the temples. In every street a *shroff*, or banker, may be seen, seated behind a pile of *cowries*, with bags of silver and copper at his elbow. These men make considerable sums by changing money, deducting a certain per-centage from every *rupee*, and by lending out money at enormous interest. Here, too, are confectioners, surrounded by the common sweetmeats, which are so much in request, and not unfrequently employed in the manufacture of their sugar-cakes. The dyers, punkah-makers, and several others, also carry on their respective occupations in their open shops; the houses of the dyers are distinguished by long pieces of gaily-coloured cloths, hung across projecting poles. In these, the bright red of the Indian rose, and the superb yellow, the bridal colour of the Hindoos, are the most conspicuous; they likewise produce brilliant greens, and rich blues, which, when formed into turbans and *cummerbunds*, very agreeably diversify the white dresses of an Indian crowd.

Bishop Heber, in his Journal, thus describes his visit to the city. After mentioning that their carriage was stopped short almost in the entrance, he goes on to say, "the rest of the way was passed in tonjons, through alleys so crowded, so narrow, and so winding, that even a tonjon sometimes passed with difficulty. The houses are mostly lofty, none, I think, less than two stories, most of three, and several of five or six, a sight which I now, for the first time, saw in India. The streets, like those in Chester, are considerably lower than the ground-floors of the houses, which have mostly arched rows in front, with little shops behind them. Above these the houses are richly embellished with verandahs, galleries, projecting oriel windows, and very broad overhanging eaves, supported by carved brackets. The number of temples is very great, mostly small, and stuck like shrines in the angles of the streets, and under the shadow of the lofty houses. Their forms, however, are not ungraceful, and there are many of them entirely covered with beautiful and elaborate carvings of flowers, animals, and palm-branches, equalling, in minuteness and richness, the best specimens that I have seen of Gothic or Grecian architecture. The material of the buildings is a very good stone from Chunar, but the Hindoos here seem fond of painting them a deep red colour, and, indeed,

of covering the more conspicuous parts of their houses with paintings, in gaudy colours, of flower-pots, men, women, bulls, elephants, gods and goddesses, in all their many-formed, many-headed, many-weaponed varieties. The sacred bulls devoted to Siva, of every age, tame and familiar as mastiffs, walk lazily up and down these narrow streets, or are seen lying across them, and hardly to be kicked up, (any blows, indeed, given them, must be of the gentlest kind, or woe be to him who braves the prejudices of this fanatic population,) in order to make way for the tonjon. Monkeys sacred to Hunimaun, the divine ape, who, as they pretend, conquered Ceylon for Rama, are in some parts of the town equally numerous, clinging to all the roofs and little projections of the temples, putting their impertinent heads and hands in every fruiterer's or confectioner's shop, and snatching the food from the children at their meals. Fakir houses, as they are called, occur at every turn, adorned with idols, and sending out an unceasing tinkling and strumming of *vinas*, *biyals*, and other discordant instruments, while religious mendicants of every Hindoo sect, offering every conceivable deformity, which chalk, filth, disease, matted locks, distorted limbs, and disgusting and hideous attitudes of penance can show, literally line the principal streets on both sides."

The Observatory, though abandoned by its *magi*, still remains, a gigantic relic of the zeal in the pursuit of science manifested in former days. The discoveries of modern times, adopted, though slowly, by eastern astronomers, have rendered it of little value for the purpose for which it was intended, and it has fallen into neglect and disuse. An extensive area, entered from the street, is divided into several small quadrangles, surrounded by cloisters, and forming cool and shady retreats, intended for the residence of those sages who studied the wonders of the firmament from the platform of the tower above. Broad flights of stairs lead to the summit of this huge, square, massive building, a terraced height well suited to the watchers of the stars, and which, at the time of its erection, was furnished with an apparatus very creditable to the state of science at that early period. The view from the Observatory is limited to the river, and the country on the opposite bank: but a far more extensive prospect is obtained from the Minarets. Adventurous persons who have climbed to the light cupolas, which crown those lofty spires, see the city of Benares under an entirely new aspect in this bird's-eye view. They perceive that there are wide spaces between the seven-storied buildings that form a labyrinth of lanes, and that gay gardens flourish in the midst of dense masses of bricks and mortar. The palaces of the city, in all their varied styles of architecture, appear to great advantage from these heights. Gothic, towers opening upon luxuriant parterres, afford a more pleasing idea of the seclusion to which the ladies of the city are doomed.

But the views of Benares from the river, also, are exceedingly fine, offering an infinite and untiring variety of scenery, of which the effect is greatly heightened by the number of trees, whose luxuriant foliage intermingles with the parapets and buttresses of the adjacent buildings. In passing down the stream in a boat, an almost endless succession of interesting objects is presented to the eye. Through the interstices which occur between tower and palace, temple and *serai*, glimpses are caught of gardens and bazaars stretching inland; an open gate displays the terraced court of some wealthy noble; long cloistered corridors lead to the secluded recesses of

the *zenana*, and small projecting turrets resting on the lofty battlements of some high and frowning building, look like the watch-towers of a feudal castle.

The ghauts are literally swarming with life at all hours of the day, and every creek and jetty are crowded with craft of various descriptions, all truly picturesque in their form and effect. A dozen *budge-rows* are moored in one place; the light *bahlio* dances on the rippling current at another; a splendid pinnacle rears its gaily-decorated masts at a third; whilst large *patalas*, and other clumsy native vessels, laden with cotton, or some other equally cumbrous cargo, choke up the river near some well-frequented wharfs. Small fairy *shallops* are perpetually skimming over the surface of the glittering stream, and sails, some white and dazzling, others, of a deep saffron hue, and many made up of tattered fragments, which bear testimony to many a heavy squall, appear in all directions.

One of the most remarkable objects at Benares is a pagoda standing in the river without any connexion with the shore. The whole foundation is under water, and two of its towers have declined so much from the perpendicular as to form an acute angle with the liquid plain beneath them. This pagoda is a pure specimen of ancient Hindoo architecture; it is of great antiquity, and, from its position, now entirely deserted, for its floors are occupied by the waters of the Ganges, and there seems to remain no record respecting it. No one appears to know when it was built, to whom it was dedicated, or why its foundations were laid in the waters of this sacred river, unless it were on account of their sanctity. It is surprising, that it has so long resisted the force of the current, which during the monsoons is uncommonly violent. It is singular to see boats continually passing in and out between its porticos, which now stand amid the waters of the sacred Ganges, at once a venerable monument of the instability of human grandeur, and the vanity of human endeavour to perpetuate, in stone or marble, enduring records of its skill, its industry, or its wealth.

In no part of Hindoostan, moreover, can one of the most beautiful of the native Festivals be seen to greater advantage than at Benares. The Duwallee is celebrated there with the greatest splendour; and its magnificence is heightened by the situation of the city upon the bank of the river, and the singular outline of the buildings. The attraction of this annual festival consists in the illuminations. At the close of evening, small *chiraugs* (earthen lamps), fed with oil which produces a brilliant white light, are placed as closely as possible together on every ledge of every building. Palace, temple, and tower, seem actually formed of stars. The city appears like the creation of the fire-king, and the view from the water affords the most superb and romantic spectacle imaginable; a scene of fairy splendour far too brilliant for description. Europeans embark in boats to enjoy the gorgeous pageant from the river; all the vessels are lighted up, and the buildings in the distance, covered with innumerable lamps, shine out in radiant beauty. European illuminations, with their coloured lamps, their transparencies, their crowns and stars, and initial letters, appear with poor effect when compared with the chaste grandeur of the Indian mode: for the outlines of a whole city are clearly marked out in streams of fire, and the coruscations of light shoot up into the dark-blue sky above, and tremble in long undulations on the rippling waves beneath. It is not an unpleasing part of this festival, that the Hindoo servants of an Anglo-Indian establishment are accustomed to offer little presents of sweetmeats

and toys to such members of the family as are likely to accept them, as the children and younger branches. On the occasion of this festival, the whole of the Mussulman, as well as Hindoo population, are abroad to witness the superb spectacle produced by the blaze of light; and as it is of a very peaceable character, it passes off without broil or bloodshed, and what is still more extraordinary, without occasioning the conflagration of half the houses.

D. I. E.

[Chiefly from the *Asiatic Journal*.]

In another paper will be given some account of Benares in its religious character.

#### A FABLE.

A SWAN and a donkey lived in the service of the same master, and were fed and petted by all the family; the patient animal bore his faculties so meekly, that he never seemed to forget that he was but a donkey; but the swan, intoxicated with the notice and admiration he received, began to think that the world, or at least the river, was made for him, and he would let no one approach his dominions. If a boy rode a horse down to the water to drink, he would fly after him, and drive him away by trying to mount the horse behind him; he would lie in wait behind a bush, spring out, and chase the ladies round the garden; and break all the sticks and umbrellas that were flourished round his head; his pride sometimes seemed quelled when the more adventurous part of the family swept him into the water with a broom, but it was only for a moment, he rose more glorious from defeat, and was in a fair way of becoming lord of the village.

The donkey looked out from his meadow in astonishment at the feats of his companion, but when reproached by the swan for his meanness of spirit, he sagaciously shook his head, saying "You will repent when too late; these are good patient people, but they will not bear it for ever." And so it proved; for, tired with the complaints of the whole neighbourhood, the master at last gave orders for the death of king swan, and that his fine white skin should be given to the ladies. Honest Jasper quaked a little at this unexampled severity: "My friend's pride," quoth he, "has cost him dear; I must take warning, and show that I am no greedy tyrant over my meadow." The next day he saw a neighbour's cows looking wistfully over the gate at his grass, which looked much better than their own because it was out of their reach: "Now is the time," quoth Jasper, "to show I have no pride;" so he pushed the gate open with his nose, and held it to invite the cows into the meadow; but their feast was soon interrupted; they were driven back with most inhospitable haste, and their entertainer was well beaten for his ill-timed politeness. "Alas! alas!" said the unfortunate Jasper, drooping his long melancholy ears, "my master is a good man, but there is no pleasing him; who would have thought of his killing the swan for pride, and beating me for humility."

How often are we unjust to others from ignorance of their motives.

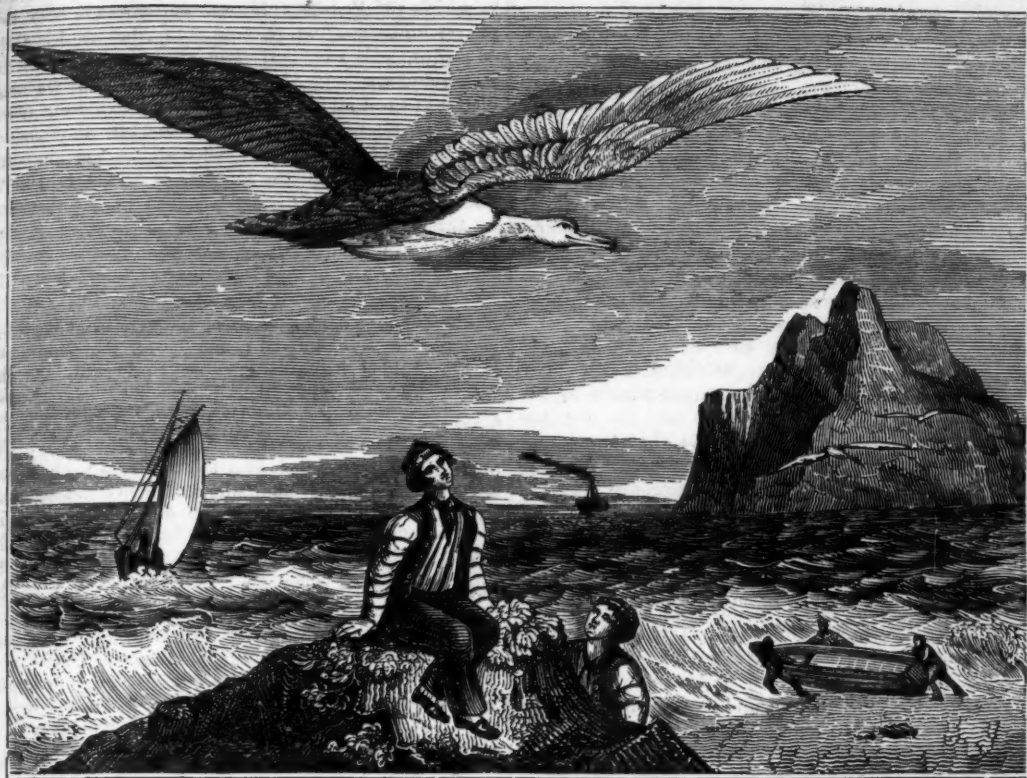
#### ON THE STUDY OF THE MATHEMATICS.

It was not without reason that the Greeks bestowed on this study the title of "*the learning*:" it well deserves the highest encomiums. Languages may become obsolete; systems of philosophy may spring up, flourish, fade, and be forgotten; even what we are apt to account *facts* in natural history, may, by future discoveries, be proved to be fictions; but the truths of mathematics are unchangeable and indisputable. Time cannot alter them, scepticism cannot obscure them: they "are the same yesterday, to day, and for ever." It would be difficult to point out, in the whole compass of human knowledge, one portion which so much tends to the enlargement of the mind, and the discipline of the powers, as mathematics.

It produces, in him who studies it thoroughly, a habit of patient investigation—of calm and deliberate judgment. It accustoms the mind to distinguish between that which is true and that which is false. It takes nothing for granted that can possibly be gainsaid. It ascends from truths, simple and easy of apprehension—truths that no man in his senses will venture to impugn—to the highest range of human thought and human intellect; while every step in the passage is as firmly fixed as the eternal rocks.

J. R.



THE WANDERING ALBATROSS. (*Diomedea exulans*.)

THE WANDERING ALBATROSS.

How oft, thou wanderer of the stormy deep,  
Is the poor sea-boy wakened from his dream,  
Of home and home's delights: when half asleep,  
High in the shrouds, he hears thy startling scream!

Safe in the storm, unhurt by wave or wind,  
On through the fearful tempest dost thou soar,  
The fleetest vessels leaving far behind,  
Unchecked amidst the elemental roar.

Alas! how sure the hand that guides thy way,  
How safe the rudder, instinct, shapes thy course;  
Ah! how unlike things made by hands of clay,—  
Thy piercing eyes, thy pinions' matchless force!

THE Albatross is the largest of all the birds that frequent the sea-coast, and measures as much as three feet in length, while its expanded wings are from nine to ten feet. The common Albatross has been called the Cape sheep, by the Dutch, on account of its extreme corpulence. The beak of this bird is very powerful, but although so well provided with a weapon of offence, it is naturally a cowardly creature, and seldom acts except on the defensive; it gets rid of the sea-gulls who are constantly teasing it, in rather a singular manner, by descending rapidly through the air, and plunging its assailant into the water.

Small marine animals, zoophytes, and the spawn of fishes, form the chief food of the Albatross; but it also greedily devours all descriptions of fishes, when it can obtain that food, and is so voracious, as to be taken with a hook and line baited merely with a piece of sheep's skin.

On account of their great weight, these birds have much difficulty in raising themselves into the air, and are obliged to assist themselves in this manoeuvre by striking the surface of the water with their feet; but when once on the wing, their flight is rapid, and apparently performed with great ease, as they appear to do little else than sway themselves in the air, sometimes inclining to the left, and at others to the

right, gliding with great rapidity over the surface of the sea. It is only in bad weather that their flight is at any great elevation; their voice is extremely disagreeable, and resembles the braying of an ass.

The principal resort of the Albatross tribe, of which there are four or five species, is the ocean in the vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope, but they are found in all parts of the South Seas. As an article of food, the Albatross is but little sought after; its flesh, on account of the nature of its food, being very rank and disagreeable; it is, however, sometimes used by the sailors, who, after skinning it, place it in salt for a few days, and eat it with some strong seasoning.

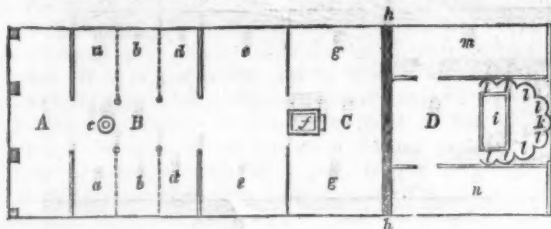
About the middle of September the female builds a nest on the sand, about three feet in circumference, and lays a considerable number of eggs, of a greyish colour and speckled black; but a great portion of these are destroyed by birds of prey, reptiles, &c.; they are also much sought after by the inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope and islands of the Indian Ocean, as an article of food, as they partake in a very slight degree of the peculiar flavour of the flesh of the birds themselves. It is a singular fact, that the yolk of these eggs never becomes hardened by the process of cooking.

HE that gives his mind to observe, will meet with many things, even in vulgar matters, worthy of observation.—BACON.

REAL alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but religion only can give patience.—DR. JOHNSON.

## THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

The House of our Dovelike Religion is simple: built on high, and in open view; looking towards the Light, as the figure of the Holy Spirit; and to the East, as the representation of Christ.—TERTULLIAN, A. D. 198.



A SHORT explanation of the above diagram (for the construction of which we are indebted to the early Christian writers), may not be unacceptable to the reader of these pages. Obscure as are the vestiges of that remote period, we doubt not that the house of Prayer, of whatever extent, comeliness, or antiquity, is an object of lively interest and reverential contemplation to the faithful of these latter times. And, perhaps, the following remarks cannot be better introduced, than by collecting, as far as we are able, some account of the places set apart for Christian worship, from the days of the Apostles themselves.

The Chamber, in which our Lord was pleased to solemnize his last Passover with the disciples, appears to have afforded the pattern of those oratories, in which, after his resurrection and ascension, they were wont to participate in holy counsel and devotion. In this apartment, made ready beforehand by his own miraculous appointment, we find him, on the eve of his sufferings, discharging the several ministrations peculiar to his Gospel. Here it was, that, in washing the feet of the disciples, he did not only teach them the humility required of his followers; but further, he did intimate to Peter, in the memorable words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me," that, without the washing of regeneration, by baptism into his death, we cannot obtain the benefits of his Cross and Passion. Here also, (as need hardly be mentioned) he instituted the most comfortable Sacrament of his most precious body and blood. Within these walls, was uttered that holy valedictory address to the future Pastors of his Church, as well as that solemn prayer to the Father, for its unity and truth, which closed his earthly ministry. And, lastly, beneath this roof did the Saviour and his chosen uplift the hymn of praise and thanksgiving, when about to retire to that dread scene of his desertion and agony, the garden in the Mount of Olives.

Consecrated as this chamber was, by the last interview with their divine Master, it is not unreasonable to conjecture (even were tradition silent), that the Apostles did, from time to time, resort thither, in memory of that solemn evening; washing, as he had taught them, in all humility, each other's feet: partaking, in the symbols of bread and wine, of his spiritual body and blood; discoursing of his marvellous acts, and heavenly doctrines; and uniting in prayer and praise to the Author of our salvation. Scripture, it is true, says little as to the place of their assemblage. It mentions the appearance of Jesus to them, on the day of his resurrection, which was the first day of the week; and again, eight days after, (John xx. 19, 26.) "when the doors were shut;" a proof that they were accustomed to meet together in private, as on the eve of our Lord's sufferings; probably in the same chamber to which He had, on that occasion, directed them. After his ascension, we find the Eleven, on their return to Jerusalem,

proceeding to an "upper room" (such as was that in which the Passover was eaten), to elect, after due prayer and supplication, another Apostle in the stead of Judas, (Acts i. 13.) The second chapter of the Acts relates, that, "when the day of Pentecost (which also was the first day of the week,) was fully come, they were all, with one accord, in one place." Whether that "one place" was the same which was prepared for the Last Supper,—whether it was the same in which our Lord manifested himself to the disciples, on the evening of the day when he arose again, and also on the eighth (or Lord's) day following,—and whether the vacant Apostleship was here allotted to Matthias, we venture not, on the authority of the above instances, to assert; though there appears nothing unreasonable in the supposition. Be this as it may, there exists no doubt, that, wherever the infant churches were planted, some place of concourse (similar to that in which the faithful met, within the walls of Jerusalem) was specially appropriated to the worship of our Lord and Saviour. In sacrificing their possessions to the furtherance of Christian truth, many would gladly devote, if not their houses, at least the principal apartment therein, to this holy use. To which the Apostle seems frequently to allude, when, in writing to particular Christians, he speaks of the "Church in their house," that is, of the assemblage of believers, resorting to some determinate place beneath their roof. In blaming the Corinthians for their irreverence in partaking of the Lord's Supper, he asks them, "Have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" Thereby drawing a distinction between their habitations, and those portions of them which were set apart for holy purposes.

Proceeding from the Apostolic age to the times of the Fathers, we find a continuance of testimony to the same purport. Clemens, one of the most ancient, writes, in his epistle to the Corinthians, that our Lord did not only determine by whom, and at what particular seasons, the ordinances of his Religion should be solemnized,—but also, the places wherein he would receive the homage of his worshippers. Justin Martyr, another early authority, mentions the faithful as assembling together, in one place, on the Lord's day. Tertullian, whose words stand at the head of these remarks, speaks not only of the Church, or House of God, but describes, also, its form and arrangement. Lucian, a heathen writer of the second century, although no friend to the Christians, describes with accuracy the apartment, in which they were accustomed to meet for the purposes of devotion.

Until the reign of Constantine, early in the fourth century, the Christians, alternately persecuted and tolerated by the imperial power, appear to have attended little to the exterior decoration of their places of worship. But, that Emperor having issued edicts prohibitory of Paganism, and in favour of Christianity, structures of unusual beauty and magnitude were erected to the promotion of our faith, not only in the cities of the empire, but in its less populous districts. These were called "Kuriaka," that is to say, "houses of the Lord;" whence our terms "Kirk" and "Church." We proceed to the consideration of their general form and arrangement, by reference to the plan above given.

The entrance was under a porch, or vestibule, (A), consisting, in their more sumptuous edifices, of marble, and frequently adorned with fountains. Here stood the lowest order of penitents, beseeching the prayers of the faithful, as they crossed the sacred threshold. To this custom we may attribute the origin of that appendage to some of our Cathedrals



which, (in reference to its distance from those precincts which were formerly accounted most holy), is still called the "Galilee," and beyond which, in former times, offenders were forbidden to proceed, until reconciled to the Church. Immediately within the doors, was the "Narthex," (a), a term, for which no accurate translation can be given, but which answers, in point of situation, to what we should call the "ante-church..". The Narthex was subdivided into three parts; in the first (a) stood the "catechumens," or learners of Christianity; in the second (b), (where was also the baptismal font (c)), were placed the "energumens," or those possessed by Satan; and the third (d), was reserved for the middle class of penitents, who were permitted to bear the public worship, but not to enter the congregation. Next to the Narthex, lay the principal body of the church, called "Naos," or "Nevis," (c) whence our term "nave," subdivided also into two parts. The first of these (e) was allotted to the higher class of penitents; above whom was placed the "Ambo," (f), answering the purposes of our pulpit and reading-desk. Beyond this was the place (g) where sat those who were called "the faithful," and who alone were admitted to partake of the Lord's Table. The third, and last principal division of the Church was the "Bima," or "Hieratium," (d), raised above the floor of the nave, and separated from it by rails (h), which were termed "cancelli," whence the corresponding portion of our churches is named the "chancel," to this day. Within this was the "Thusiasterion," or altar (i); so named metaphorically, because there was offered the commemorative sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; also spoken of by the Greek Fathers, as the "Hagia Trapeza," or holy table. At the extremity of the "Bima," and immediately under the east window, was the chair, or throne (k) from which the bishop addressed the people; and to the right of which were the seats of the presbyters, elders, or priests, (l). The deacons were not permitted to sit there. On the north of the chancel, was the "diaconicon," (m), where the vessels and garments appointed for divine service were kept. Lastly, on the south was the "prothesis," (n) where were laid the alms, oblations, and remainder of the consecrated elements, until properly disposed of.

Such were the edifices dedicated to Christian worship, in the earlier and purer ages of the Church. No superfluous ornament, no appeal to the senses by the hand of art, no antiscritptural practice or ceremony, had then intruded within their portals. The Lord's Table, though figuratively styled (as in our days) the "Altar," in reference to the sacrifice and death of Christ, there commemorated,—to the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, there offered,—and the alms and oblations laid thereon, as unto God, in behalf of the necessitous; resembled as little in the cosiness of its materials, as in its usage, those pompous altars which were the boast of the Heathen temples, and which afterwards were but too successfully rivalled by the mistaken zeal and overweening pride of a Church, arrogating to herself the supreme rule in all things spiritual. Whence one of the principal objections urged against the Christians, was, that they had no altars. To which the Fathers made reply, that they needed none; the only true altar being a pure and holy mind;—the best and most acceptable sacrifice, a pious heart, and an innocent and religious life. "These (said they) are our oblations; these the sacrifices which we owe to God."

And, as we learn hence, that all superstitious usages of the Christian altar were then unknown, so is it

equally certain, that no images were allowed a place within their churches. When censured by their enemies on this very account, the writers in defence of our faith, far from denying the charge, appear to have considered it as an additional evidence of the simplicity and holiness of their religion. We cannot, perhaps, give a better summary of their opinions on this subject, than in the words of Origen, who flourished towards the middle of the third century. He tells his adversaries, that the images which the Christians dedicated to God were not to be carved by the hand of artists, but to be formed and fashioned in us by the Word of God; being the virtues of justice and temperance, of wisdom and piety, that conform us to the Image of his Son. "These (says he) are our only statues, formed in our minds; and by which alone we are persuaded to honour Him, who is the Image of the Invisible God, the prototype and archetypal pattern of all such images." Figurative, (and, in some degree, fanciful) as these allusions may seem, they evidence, how little of external circumstance was necessary to strengthen the faith, or quicken the devotion of believers in that day. Kneeling towards those precincts which had been consecrated by the bodily presence of the "Sun of Righteousness," and with that glorious symbol of his Spirit, the light of Heaven, before their eyes; how vain, how derogatory would they deem every endeavour of art, to imprint the person of the Saviour on their memories, or to portray their conceptions of his unspeakable beauty and holiness!

It were unjust to close these remarks, without advertng to the memory of those great and pious men, upon whom, in later times, devolved the charge of removing from our churches the superstitious vanities which, during the lapse of centuries, had grown with the growth, and strengthened with the strength of the Papal supremacy. Comparing the simplicity of those arrangements which we have been considering, with the gorgeous superfluities, introduced by, and still retained in, the Church of Rome; we cannot too highly appreciate the caution and judgment of our Reformers, in adopting such details of the primitive model, as were warranted by the circumstances of their times. Whether it would have been judicious, or even practicable, to carry the resemblance beyond this point, is not for us to decide; so different was the position of the Church, when triumphing, in the might of her Lord, over the paganism of the Empire, from her state, when emerging from the darkness and bondage of the middle ages.. But this we may with truth affirm that they acted upon, and illustrated that noble principle, which should ever be observed in the maintenance of the worship of God,—the preservation of its dignity from pomp, its simplicity from meanness.

T. P. O.

#### THE SABBATH.

Lo! smiling like an angel from the sky,  
The Sabbath-morning comes to bless mankind:  
Before her face earth's meaner pleasures fly,  
And grov'ling cares. Th' emancipated mind  
Now feels its freedom, casts the world behind,  
And with glad welcome hails the happy train  
That wait upon her steps. There REST, reclined  
On PEACE, advancing, cheers the toil-worn swain;  
DEVOTION moves with meek and solemn mien,  
By CONTEMPLATION wrapt in holy trance:  
HOPE, led by TRUTH, regardless of the vain  
And transient joys of life, with forward glance,  
Beholds, while FAITH directs her raptur'd eye  
Th' unbroken SABBATH of ETERNITY.

Chichester, Oct. 1834.

CHARLES CROCHER.



FAIRY RING.

## SUPERSTITION.

It is astonishing to observe what an inclination prevails amongst some persons, when they meet with any extraordinary appearance in the natural world, the real cause of which they cannot exactly understand, to ascribe its existence to a supernatural influence; to Satan, for instance, or to those fancied beings, called Fairies. This is the case with respect to what are named SATAN'S FOOTSTEPS, and FAIRY RINGS. Any one who endeavours to remove these superstitious opinions, by explaining the real causes of such things, does good service to those who make such mistakes, and with this view, we transcribe the following extracts from an interesting little work, *Howitt's Book of the Seasons*.

## SATAN'S FOOTSTEPS.

There is a singular appearance often observed in spring, which has excited many a superstitious terror in the minds of the simple country people, and which, in reality, is very striking. It is the print of footsteps across the grass of the fields, as though they had been footsteps of fire. The grass is burnt black in the foot-prints, presenting a startling contrast with the vivid green of that around. The common people have, consequently, concluded these to be the traces of the nocturnal perambulations of Satan, whereas they are those of some one of themselves, who has crossed the fields while the night-frost was on the grass, which, at this season, is very tender, and is as effectually destroyed by the pressure of a foot, in its frosty brittleness, as by fire, and with much the same appearance.—p. 85.

## FAIRY RINGS.

Those singular appearances in the grass, called Fairy Rings, are never more conspicuous than during the Autumn months. Even when all other grass is brown, they exhibit a well-defined and bright-green circle. The production of these remarkable circles, and the property which they possess, of every year becoming larger, have, of late years, been the subject of various theories. They have been attributed to lightning; they have been attributed to *fungi*, (that is, mushrooms, toadstools, and such things,) which every year grow upon the outer margin of the circle, and then perishing, cause, by the remains, a fresh circle of vivid green to appear,

somewhat wider, of course, than the former one. They have also been attributed to insects. The least plausible theory is that of lightning; the most plausible, that of *fungi*. Insects are a consequence of the *fungi*, rather than a cause of the circle; for where there are *fungi*, there will be insects to devour them. *Fungi* are also always found, more or less, about them. I have seen them of so large a species, that, in their growth, they totally destroyed the grass beneath them, dividing the green ring into two, and leaving one of bare rich mould between them. The origin of these circles, too, which hitherto has escaped the eyes of the naturalist, but which is nothing more than a small mushroom-bed, made by the dung of cattle lying undisturbed in the grass, till it becomes completely incorporated with the soil beneath, favours, more than all, the theory of the *fungi*. Every one knows than where this occurs, a tuft of rank grass springs up, in the centre of which a crop of *fungi* sometimes appears, and again perishes. There, then, is the nucleus of a fairy ring. The next year the tuft is found to have left a green spot, of perhaps a foot and a half diameter, which has already parted in the centre. This expansion goes on from year to year; the area of the circle is occupied by common grass, and successive crops of *fungi* give a vivid greenness to the ring which bounds it. That only a few tufts are converted into fairy rings may be owing to their not being sufficiently enriched to become mushroom-beds; but that all fairy rings which exist have this origin will be found to admit of little doubt.

D. I. E.

LET every man in the first address to his actions, consider, whether, if he were now to die, he might safely and prudently do such an act; and whether he would not be infinitely troubled that death should surprise him in his present dispositions; and then let him proceed accordingly.—ST. BERNARD.

EVEN in the fiercest uproar of our stormy passions, conscience, though in her softest whispers, gives to the supremacy of rectitude the voice of an undying testimony.—CHALMERS.

LONDON:  
JOHN WILLIAM PARKER, WEST STRAND.  
PUBLISHED IN WEEKLY NUMBERS, PRICE ONE PENNY, AND IN MONTHLY PARTS  
PRICE SIXPENCE, AND  
Sold by all Booksellers and Newsreaders in the Kingdom.